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ABSTRACT

To establish a philosophical meeting ground between Indians and white men, this document compares the Indian world view with the concept of Outward Bound. Part 1 points out the similarity between the Indian world view and the thinking behind the white man's interest in wilderness experience as a character builder, and compares the Outward Bound concept with the Indian world view. Part 2 describes North American Indian ceremonial observances and the universal Indian practice of the vision quest, a vigil in which the individual could go alone with few essentials to a mountain top or isolated place for several days of "lamenting." There is also a discussion of the social patterns of various tribes and the cultural difficulties Indians encounter in adapting to various aspects of American Life. Part 3 connects the thinking of early airplane pilots and mountaineers with the philosophy of Outward Bound. Following a description of the content of Outward Bound programs, similarities between Outward Bound activities and Indian habits and rationale are discussed. A comparison is made between Outward Bound's "Solo" experience and the Indian ritual of the vision quest. (CM)

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AMERICAN INDIAN WORLD VIEW

AND THE

OUTWARD BOUND CONCEPT:

A COMPARISON

By

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PART ONE

The efforts of the United States to encourage the American Indian to engage meaningfully in the life of this country have been focused on securing their political equality, economic well-being and educational opportunities. Such efforts may be helped by recognition of a common ground on which we, and they, can build an acceptable relationship. The conception of a common ground, a common philosophical ground, as the basis on which to establish a meeting of the red man and the white man has not often been seriously considered. It is then the purpose of this inquiry to establish the nature of a possible philosophical meeting, thereby providing guidelines for action.

The American Indian has had a view of reality, or world view, which was, in its original formulation, rooted in a response to the coercion of nature. Life was seen as ordeal and the posture that the red man assumed was one of being up to those challenges which were over against him....in order to survive. Survival in the unforgiving natural environment was seen as the result of a dynamic harmony within the three-fold nature of the Indian's existence; the personal inner life, which included the door to the spiritual, the natural environment, and the social reality. These were seen as the interrelated forces of the world. A man's life and the life of his people depended on this; that a man be hard on himself and be aggressive against those forces which would dissipate the crucial balance in himself and in the world.

Today, it is this attitude of relationship with the world which still encourages the Indian people to think and feel essentially in the old way, although they themselves recognize that the reality which fostered this world view has changed or is at least more complicated and unclear in the present situation.

We in the United States and the modern world in general, also have knowledge and a tradition of that same world view which guided the American Indian. Like the Indian, we find that those activities which are close to the physical dangers

of the natural environment prompt the clearest expression of this world view. Unlike the Indian of 100 years ago, however, modern man is not born between the narrow limits imposed by the direct coercion of nature - he chooses to go there. The invention of the airplane, for example, has ushered in an activity which brings man into direct contact with a new aspect of nature. Mountaineering is another example; an activity which simply represents the choice to go out and meet that which is over against one, and to gain satisfaction in being up to that chosen challenge.

Recently, there has been renewed interest in the sea, the mountains and the wilderness as good schools of character. A sense of values hard won from ordeal is now the goal rather than any direct necessity for overcoming the physical challenge itself. This philosophy is implemented by organizations such as the Outward Bound Schools which were, "established to speak to the deep concerns and ills of our age,"[1] with its "confusion of values, rapid and often chaotic social change, increasing insensitivity and dependency." These schools place young people up against the adversity of the wilderness, emphasizing, as did the Indians, solitude and adventure, not for their own sake but because they demand of individuals their best resources: the "will to prevail" over obstacles and personal fear, a "sense of values to sustain them" and, those "qualities of human responsibility and compassion to sustain each other."[2]

The world view which motivated the Indian people and some of the thinking behind the above mentioned activities of the modern world, both represent a purposeful development toward the establishment of a balance; a dynamic harmony between the personal inner life, nature, and the social reality. Implicit is the recognition that when one aspect of this three-fold reality is unstable, such as the natural environment, then the other two aspects must be reinforced. If the natural environment is stabilized, then the social realm and the personal inner life must be up-graded in order to be up to the new level of harmony, that is, the increased requirements for survival.

The philosophy behind programs such as the Outward Bound Schools is oriented toward cultivating an awareness of this persistent and necessary harmony - necessary irrespective of the level of civilization - by returning to the simplicity of that primary path; confrontation with nature. The efforts of the Indian people were oriented around this understanding and directed toward the maintainance of the crucial harmony, although their world was, in fact, confined within the narrow limits of unsubdued nature. It is in the area of this understanding that the American Indian may have much to offer the modern world. Perhaps a working relationship can be established between the red man and the white man with this goal and path in mind. The relationship may be expressed in the establishment of an Outward Bound-type activity in Indian country - or in whatever other ways this knowledge may direct.

PART TWO

In order to place those activities of the historical American Indian - including the present day Indian mind - in context, an understanding of the relevant aspects of a world view common to all the many Indian nations, is necessary. This world view may be termed the primary world view when:

> "...man looked out upon a cosmos partaking at once of the qualities of man, nature and God. That which man confronted was not three separate things but rather one thing with aspects which, in light of the distinctions that have become much sharper since, we call by these three terms. If later world views might be compared with reference to a triangle of these three conceptions - Man, Nature, God - the primary world view was one in which the triangle itself was not very apparent. This unitary character of the cosmos in the case of folk people is recognized on the one hand when it is said that the world of the folk is pervaded with sacredness. On the other hand, it is recognized when it is said that the world of the folk is personal. The two ideas, put together, refer to the hardly separable interpenetration of man, nature and God in that which the precivilized man confronted."(1)

These words by Robert Redfield, an anthropologist, well describe the mood of the primary world view. A penetrating look is directed by Martin Buber, the philosopher, at the psychological posture of man in the primary world view.(2) For the "I", or individual in the primary world view, the universe, or "that which is over against man", is seen as "Thou", and the relationship is experienced as a rapport in life confronting life. "I-Thou" is then the primary word of the primary world view. The dissolution, however, of the three-fold nature of the universe, brings man as the "I" into confrontation with a world of "IT", a world of "things" which can only be "used." But a man cannot live only in the "I-Thou" relationship because he must, for example, kill for food. As he opposes himself to a deer, that deer is an "IT." In this act, the hunter has dissolved the unity of the cosmos, placing himself in the alienated relationship of a lonely "I" opposed to the world of "IT." But the man of the primary world view does not remain transfixed in the "I-IT" relationship. First of all, he has killed only what he needs. He will then psychologically re-establish the "I-Thou" relationship of rapport and sharing - perhaps through ritual apology to the dead deer.

This, then, is the content of Redfield's interpenetration of man, nature, and God; a functional relationship and not the static, non-differentiation which first meets the Western eye. Man is mankind or the social reality. Nature is simply the natural environment. The spiritual may be seen as grounded in the degree of awareness to which the individual attains in the personal inner life.

The ceremonial observances of the North American Indian constituted the "...symbolism of the Indian understanding of life, and viewed as a body, they serve to define this understanding from the many approaches which living experience opens."(3) The primary world view is the form for which this ceremonial life was the content; a content of "living experience" which directed attention to all three aspects of the Indian people's world: social, natural and spiritual.

Within this framework, it was necessary for each individual to gain a comprehensive awareness of the three-fold reality; to be attentive to it continually and to prepare, through attaining both spiritual and physical strength, for the ordeals of life and the challenges of living it well. That strength was embodied in the four cardinal Indian virtues; bravery, fortitude, generosity, and wisdom or moral integrity.(4) These virtues were realized through repeated acts of will made in the personal inner life of an individual. The gaining of a personal "vision" was of significance in this respect.

The vision quest was a universal practice among the many Indian nations and, although the particulars varied, it was essentially a vigil in which the individual would ritually prepare himself and go alone with a very few essentials to a mountain top or isolated place and remain several days "lamenting".(5)

> "There are many reasons for going to a lonely mountaintop to 'lament'. Some young men receive a vision when they are very young and do not expect it, and they go to 'lament' that they might understand it better. Then we 'lament' if we wish to make ourselves brave for a great ordeal such as the Sun Dance or to prepare for going on the warpath. Some people 'lament' in order to ask some favor of the Great Spirit such as the curing of a sick relative;

> and then we also 'lament' as an act of thanksgiving for some great gift which the Great Spirit may have given us. But perhaps the most important reason for 'lamenting' is that it helps us to realize our oneness with all things, to know that all things are our relatives..."(6)

These words came from Black Elk, an old priest of the Oglala Sioux. Possessed of a lofty wisdom, this "holy man" may be considered a representative of the most noble aspirations of the American Indian.

In undertaking a vision quest the imperative was to be continually attentive to the situation at hand, to one's actions and to avoid the threat of distraction. This message:

> "...'Be Attentive!' - well expresses a spirit which is central to the Indian peoples; it implies that in every act, in every thing, and in every instant, the Great Spirit is present, and that one should be continually and intensely attentive to this Divine presence."(7)

Meditation and concentration must then be an integral part of the Indian's life. Paul Radin, an ethnologist, says of the Winnebago Indians, that:

> "Seriousness of intention has in its turn developed into a definite theory of concentration. Frivolity becomes an unpardonable sin. The Winnebago have a verb which means, 'to concentrate one's mind' and this concentration of mind has come to be absolutely essential for every prayer and rite - for every undertaking, in fact."(8)

The vision quest was a difficult mental and physical challenge; an atmosphere of life at a white heat. The Indians of the Glacier Park region tell of a Flathead brave:

> "...who carried a bison skull from the area around Flathead Lake over the high passes... and up the long slopes to the base of Chief Mountain. Then, even though several accounts were known of Indians who had disappeared on its cliffs, he dragged himself and the bison skull to the summit and began fasting...For four nights he stayed on top, sleeping with the skull for his pillow, and four days he paced the summit, chanting warrior songs and attempting to make peace with the Gods who were to decide his destiny. The Spirit of the Mountain attempted to drive him off

> the peak constantly during his vigil, until, at last, on the fourth night it yielded. The Spirit then smoked the peace pipe with the brave and gave him the sacred token which was to protect him so that no peril of battle or of the hunt could overcome him. He died of old age, the greatest of the Flathead warriors, but just before his death, he told the young men of the tribe the source of his powerful 'medicine'.(9)

And from the Chippewa:

> "...but in later times men go no more upon the warpath. The song is never sung. Still, that which was once dreamed is remembered; the sign seen in the vision is painted and swung from the pole; and because of the vision the man may be esteemed as a doctor and a healer. To one who understands the symbolism the pole beside the house seems to say: 'Here lives a man who dreamed a dream and the mysterious strength of his vision is in him. He never used it against human foe, but more than other man he has power against the greater enemy-death'."(10)

The desired relationship of the individual Indian to the social reality may be expressed in this way: "...with all beings and with all things we shall be as relatives."(11) Ceremonially the concept was emphasized in the Hako rites of the Pawnee and parallel rites such as the Wanan of the Omaha, the Hunka of the Sioux and the Piraskani of the Arikara.(12) Common to all was a concentration on those ties which unite individuals and communities. As with the Hako ceremony, the ties and fundamental feelings of a father for his child were symbolically extended to the group as a whole. The action was "...not alone a prayer for individual protection but far more for children and for tribal generations and human nations."(13) The Sioux call this ceremony Hunkapi or "The Making of Relatives." This statement, from Black Elk, is a good description of the comprehensiveness of the ties.

> "I wish to mention here, that through these rites a three-fold peace was established. The first peace, which is the most important, is that which comes within the souls of men when they realize their relationship, their oneness, with the universe and all its Powers, and when they realize that at the center of the

> universe dwells Waken-Tanka, and that this center is really everywhere, it is within each of us. This is the real Peace, and the others are but reflections of this. The second peace is that which is made between two individuals, and the third is that which is made between two nations. But above all you should understand that there can never be peace between nations until there is first known that true peace which, as I have often said, it within the souls of men."(14)

This same attitude of the interrelatedness of the world is also present in the Indian concept of health; a sphere which well represents the Indian feelings about man in relation to nature. The following statement was made with particular reference to the Navaho.

> "...health is symptomatic of a correct relationship between man and his environment; his supernatural environment, the world around him, and his fellow man. Health is associated with good, blessing and beauty and all that is positively valued in life. Illness on the other hand, bears evidence that one has fallen out of this delicate balance."(15)

To effect a cure is as much a spiritual problem as a physical one. The cure must take into account the recreating and strengthening of the ill person's relationship to the world harmony; for the Indian "...does not make the distinction between religion and medicine that we do; for him they are aspects of the same thing."(16) The "Blessing Way" in which the "singer" or healer is joined by relatives and friends of the ill person, all lending their support in his behalf, "...is a means of recreating the harmony or of strengthening it."(17)

The respect given for old age among Indian people is bound up in this same understanding. The elder is honored not so much for "...his personal wisdom as for the power of his 'medicine'...with the conviction that an elder by his mere power to endure to the end the ordeal of his years, has thereby demonstrated a spiritual superiority."(18)

The effectiveness of such rituals as the "Blessing Way" and "The Making of Relatives", as well as the more well known ones such as the Sun Dance of the Plains,

the Snake Dance of the Pueblos and the Corn Dance of the tribes to the east, depended on the combined powers and strengths of the individuals concerned. In the case of the Sun Dance, the ceremony is "...undertaken in fulfillment of a vow made by an individual... With the maker of the vow others might associate themselves, each to join in the performance in his own fashion and according to his own measures."(19)

A three-fold purpose guided all ceremonial observances; the purification and strengthening of individuals, the reaffirmation of group strength and unity, and the reaffirmation of ties with the powers of nature.(20) The attitude was essentially that man was in the position of conservationist and his responsibility, practical and ceremonial, centered around maintaining those harmonies in himself and his group through which nature would continue tc be generous.

Today, it is this attitude of relationship with the world which still encourages the Indian people to think and feel essentially in the old way. Resistance to acculturation is often grounded in this core philosophical issue; a cause having to do with the psychological readiness "...or the realities of the inner life which Indians share among themselves...Even among the few who have been successful in making the transition to urban life, rarely is the tie of relatedness completely and finally severed. This is one reality that Indians know about themselves. It has nothing to do with government subsidies or government control over Indian resources."(21)

The Declaration of Indian Purpose, formulated by representatives from ninety tribes at Chicago in 1961 gives us a recent and clear statement from the Indians themselves. The following sections point to core issues.

> "The conditions in which Indians live today reflect a world in which every basic aspect of life has been transformed. Even the physical world is no longer the controlling factor in determining where and under what conditions men may live.
>
> When the Indians speak of the continent they yielded, they are not referring only to the loss of some millions of acres

> in real estate. They have in mind that the land supported a universe of things they knew, valued and loved.
>
> The answers we seek are not commodities to be purchased, neither are they evolved automatically through the passage of time...
>
> The Indian seeks the time and assistance needed...to regain in America of the space age some measure of the adjustment they enjoyed as the original possessors of their native land."(22)

The loss of the old way of life is the loss of the cohesiveness of their world. The "adjustment" and the ability of the Indian people to exercise control over their life was grounded in their world view and their confidence in the efficacy of understandings based on it. The interrelatedness of the world, which was the core principle, meant that to understand a situation correctly, all forces which have a bearing on life must be considered; the natural environment, the social reality, and the personal inner life, which included the door to the spiritual. To reject any one would result in an unworkable view of reality.

The Indian people have, however, come to accept, in a superficial manner, some elements of the modern world's way of living. In most cases this has taken place as an incorporation into their own system rather than the form of a replacement. Even among tribes of the eastern United States who have been in contact with western civilization the longest, "...modern studies of Indian communities show that adoption of the externals of American life is not neatly correlated with accompanying changes in basic Indian attitudes, mind and personality...among the Cherokees of North Carolina...or the Navahos of the Southwest...the same inner Indian feelings about the world and man's place in nature, the same non-competitive attitudes, the same disinterest in the American drive for progress and change..."(23) are in evidence.

In some cases the old social patterns have formed around modern elements. A noted example is that of the Mohawks of the Caughnawaga Reservation near the St. Lawrence. After the coming of the white man, the Indians had been encouraged to take up farming but most considered that type of life to be unacceptable to them. In the 1700's some took jobs with the French fur trade. "They liked the work - it

was hard but hazardous." When it declined, "some switched to the St. Lawrence timber-rafting industry and became famous on the river for their skill in running immense rafts of oak and pine over the Lachine Rapids."(24) In 1886 the construction of a bridge bordering the reservation introduced them to the work of steel construction. An official of the Dominion Bridge Co. of Canada described their first contact with these Indians.

> "They were dissatisfied with this arrangement (ordinary labor work) and would come out on the bridge every chance they got. It was quite impossible to keep them off. As the work progressed, it became apparent to all concerned that these Indians were very odd in that they did not have any fear of heights. If not watched, they would climb up into the spans and walk around up there just as cool and collected as the toughest of our riveters, most of whom at that period were old sailing ship men especially picked for their experience in working aloft. These Indians were as agile as goats. They would walk a narrow beam high up in the air with nothing below them but river..."(25)

The Mohawks became famous for their abilities on high steel and their lives took on a pattern of traveling throughout the country wherever there was new construction. Many settled in New York to work on the skyscrapers but would leave at the mention that an even bigger undertaking was underway, even as distant as California. It seemed that it was the nature of the job that mattered rather than the money or convenience. In between work there was usually a return to the reservation - but never to stay long. "There was an efflorescence of the old native religion; the men left to work on bridges and came back in wintertime to talk about their exploits. In general, there was a revival of a certain pattern of life with different content but essentially the same structure as existed in the old society."(26)

Among some Indian groups, the two ways of life have continued to be so divergent that modern ways which have been adopted are compartmentalized and kept psychologically separate. In the case of the Sioux, Navaho, Zuni, Hopi, Zia and Midwestern children studied by Havighurst and Neugarten,(27) the "white" games which were learned at school were accepted as having "white" rules; rules which

could be changed by "agreement of those concerned." At the same time, the Indian children maintained that in Indian games the rules were still unalterable. To the Indian, the rules and values of life, too, are absolutes. They are inherited through traditional patterns and related directly to the "reality" of how the world works. However, in modern societies it is expected that later in adolescence a child will develop toward autonomy of decision making coincident with the broadening of knowledge and the development of a "personal view of the world." All children in all cultures follow the heteronomous pattern of morality until they arrive at adolescence at which point they begin to adopt that pattern which is prevalent in their adult society. In the case of the modern world, the pattern adopted is termed a "morality of agreement...in which they learn to make rules for themselves by common agreement among those who are involved." As indicated above, this change was not seen in the Indian groups. Havighurst and Neugarten report that although the Midwestern children moved later to the expected "autonomous morality of agreement" concerning the rules, "Nowhere among the Indian groups in this study do we see the steady growth from moral heteronomy to moral autonomy that we expect in children of a modern society."(28) They go on to quote an older Indian student, 18 years old. "Concerning Navajo games he says that rules cannot be changed 'because the holy people taught us them. It is not right to change them.' " The implication is that the individual is part of an organic whole and cannot establish himself securely contrary to those "absolute" rules by which the forces of the world are bound.

It should not be thought, however, that this implied a completely social orientation. It was a recognition of the importance of the social community within the balanced life. "Each individual is controlled not by sanctions from the top of a hierarchy of persons but by lateral sanctions."(29) The individual Indian therefore felt a responsibility to his group but was not submerged within it, because:

> "...responsibility arose from feelings of relatedness with the universe. The self was coextensive with the universe, yet completely autonomous. Children were assigned tasks, but never supervised, in order to develope their autonomy. Coercion and

> persuasion were unacceptable to them since no person could decide for another..."(30)

The morality of absolute values must then be considered as resident in the interrelatedness of the universe. It was from this apparently contrary basis that responsibility arose, itself an autonomous response. Paul Radin provides the following comment regarding the question of responsibility among the Indian people:

> "...no moral judgement is passed on any aspect of human personality as such. Human nature is what it is and each act, emotion, belief, unexpressed or expressed, must be allowed to make or mar a man...It was thus the insistent admonition of the wise men - that man learn the limits imposed by nature, and above all that man learn the limitations to his own powers. Neglect of this brings one into collision with reality and a collision with reality means lack of success and often death."(31)

The difficulties which the Indians have had in organizing on any large scale basis can be traced to such considerations. A good example would be the idea of majority rule, which, "taken so for granted in Anglo-Saxon governing bodies, was at first a divisive rather than a unifying principle in the Indian groups where action is customarily delayed until all the people are in agreement or at least the dissidents agree to stand aside."(32)

Unity of purpose and ideal and unity of social commitment to these absolutes which is characteristic of the Indian world view, has in the modern world become more and more the autonomous responsibility of the individual members. The following words from Randall, The Making of the Modern Mind, indicate the extent of this divergency.

> "The forces centered in the individual members broke down the nicely adjusting, binding ties, and in every field of human endeavor, in religion, in science, in art, in economic life, in political control, more and more emphasis was laid on the growth and expression of the potentialities of the individual elements and less and less on the organization of these elements into wholes, toward which the individual members felt a

> diminishing sense of responsibility. The typical ideals of the period, individuality and self-sufficiency, served as the ground of a new attempt to order the world, an order that became more mathematical and mechanical than hierarchical and organic.
>
> The various sciences that used to be embraced in the one comprehensive 'natural philosophy' have gone their various ways to goals that seem quite diverse; while instead of certain common and universally accepted principles and attitudes in philosophy, the attempt to get some general view of the world and some clear distinction between the things that are worthwhile and those that are not worthwhile for a good life, has become more and more an individual task"(33)

The factors which have remained are those "realities of the inner life which the Indians share among themselves." These feelings are grounded in the Indian's concept of themselves in relationship to the world. Even in cases of the external adoption of material aspects of American life, there has not been an acceptance of those patterns of thought that constitute the modern mind.

PART THREE

In the diversity which characterizes our modern age, there exist activities and threads of thought expressive of understanding similar to those outlined in the Indian world view. Focusing attention on two such activities comprises part of the next pages and the thoughts of the men involved are clearly part of the philosophical heritage of the Outward Bound Schools, the last activity considered in the context of a close compatibility with the Indian world view. In the case of Outward Bound, however, there exists a more meaningful compatibility in content as well as form.

Antoine St. Exupery had this to say about the craft of the airplane pilot in its pioneering phase:

> "The machine which at first blush seems a means of isolating man from the great problems of nature, actually plunges him more deeply into them. As for the peasant so for the pilot, dawn and twilight become events of consequence. His essential problems are set him by the mountain, the sea, the wind."(1)

> "And thus, also, the realities of nature resume their pride of place. It is not with metal that the pilot is in contact. Contrary to the vulgar illusion, it is thanks to the metal, and by virtue of it, that the pilot rediscovers nature."(2)

The realities which the pilots faced emphasizes the 'present time' awareness which the uncertainty and unpredictability of their situation demanded. St. Exupery explains this more fully in telling about his friend Guillaumet:

> "Guillaumet's courage is in the main the product of his honesty. But even this is not his fundamental quality. His moral greatness consists in his sense of responsibility. He knew that he was responsible for himself, for the mails, for the fulfillment of the hopes of his comrades."(3)

> "You never felt the need of cheapening your adversaries before confronting them. When you saw a foul storm you said to yourself, 'Here is a foul storm.' You accepted it, and you took its measure."(4)

Life is seen as ordeal and the posture that these men must assume is one of being up to those challenges which are over against them...in order to survive. The traits which St. Exupery honors are those same traits which help to define the American Indian:

> "...restrained and non-demonstrative emotional bearing... generosity...autonomy of the individual...high regard for courage and bravery...fear of the world as a dangerous place... detailed, practical, and immediate concern in problem situations.."(5)

These traits comprise a total emotional commitment on the part of the individual and it is these values that transcend the particular activities. The pilot, especially in the early days of the craft, was faced with a straightforward reality possessed of three interrelated forces: the "essential problems" of the natural environment - wind, mountains, storms; the social reality - those purposes for which the society has commissioned the work as well as the immediate social reality between himself and his co-pilot and comrades; and the personal inner life out of which arise those qualities of skill, intuition and determination upon which success most directly depends - in a word, his sense of responsibility.

And so it is with mountaineering: a return to that primary confrontation with a forbidding natural environment.

> "Master of his energies, rich in everything, a man may choose the life he considers worthy. So will the alpinist choose and, tackling obstacles, make his way in absolute freedom. If adventure is disappearing from around us, we still carry it within us."(6)

St. Exupery, the pilot, and Maurice Herzog, the alpinist, are speaking to us from the vantage points of their own experience; out of life in its complexity, confronting life in its simplicity. They are indeed stating that:

> "We need to re-discover the vast, harmonious pattern of the natural world we are a part of - the infinite complexity

> and variety of its myriad components, the miraculous simplicity of the whole. We need to learn again those essential qualities of our own selves which make us what we are: the energy of our bodies, the alertness of our minds; curiosity and the desire to satisfy it, fear and the will to conquer it. The mountain may well be a way of escape - from the cities and men, from the turmoil and doubt, from the perplexities and uncertainties and sorrows that thread our lives. But in the truest and most profound sense it is an escape not <u>from</u> but <u>to</u> reality."(7)
>
> James Ramsey Ullman

To follow this path, either on a work-errand for our modern world or simply as a personal quest, is to ultimately take the measure of one's self - of those abilities and that personal inner stability in which one may have confidence. The outward challenge is the inward mirror, for as the mountain climber may sense, there exists an inward response to the mountain environment.

> "For a long time we gazed at the mysterious mountain which had enchanted our evenings around the campfire; then, when my eyes could look away along the immense valley bottom, utterly silent and deserted, I thought of the Oisand, of the Valais, of the Oberland, and I said to myself: 'This place is just like home, only on a larger scale!' It is one of those places marked in ochre and white on the atlas, high, sterile, and good for nothing; nothing marketable grows there, and higher still nothing can exist at all. It is one of those spots made solely for the happiness of men, in order that in this changing world, grown every day more artificial, they might yet find a few gardens full of primal colours that are good for the eyes and for the heart."(8)
>
> Gaston Rebuffat

Therefore:

> "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived."(9)
>
> Thoreau

> "Existence on a mountain is simple. Seldom in life does it come any simpler; survival plus the striving toward a summit. The goal is solidly, three-dimensionally there - you can see it, touch it, stand upon it - the way to reach it well defined, the energy of all directed toward its achievement..."
>
> Thomas Hornbein

The following words, spoken after a cold winter struggle on an Alpine North Face may well represent the learning of what "...the essential facts of life... had to teach..".

> "Yet we knew for the first time that we were again close to human beings, and we felt that the true and only life is in the valleys at home, and that all summit conquering has meaning only in relation to that... It was ourselves, not the mountain, that we had overcome. During those days we had succeeded in realizing all the possibilities with which we were endowed, and in contemplating that fact, we feel a great inner peace and satisfaction."(11)
>
> Hilti von Allmen

"All summit conquering" is indeed a kind of self-expression, but self-expression is, as the Indian people have recognized, an integral part of human nature.(12) They have also believed it to be the outward sign of the self's desire to realize all its potentialities, the realization of which can be the first step toward knowledge of man's place and his responsibility in the scheme of the world as a whole. Whether among immediate companions or within a broader community. "Adventure must lead to involvement; involvement to service and responsibility."(13) With this thought in mind the Outward Bound Schools state as their purpose:

> "..to reveal to these young people qualities in themselves they never knew existed. Not just physical qualities, but mental and spiritual qualities as well... The whole purpose of Outward Bound is to impel young people, while there is still time, into the kind of experiences which will have a profound and lasting effect on their character."(14)

A brief description of the content of Outward Bound programs can serve as a structural framework in which to place the more specific parallels between their philosophical outlook and that of the American Indian. The Outward Bound organization, as it exists in the United States, has schools located in Oregon, Maine, Minnesota, Colorado and North Carolina. The programs deal specifically with the natural environment as found at their location; in Maine the school is directly oriented to the sea; in Colorado, the western mountains; in Minnesota, the lake country and wilderness. Basic to all schools is the early morning "dip", the ropes course, running, rock climbing, service, marathon, expeditioning and the "solo". In some areas they have a 'Mobile Course', which as the title indicates, takes the group into new and constantly changing situations and challenges - for the instructor as well as the patrol members. The thinking behind the Mobile Course emphasizes the interrelationship of purpose and activity. As they have described it themselves: "...less of the program is contrived; it appears less of a game. This is life; there is a mountain range to be explored."(15)

The major emphasis of Outward Bound is to re-establish the place of adventure in the 'forming' of one's life; "an escape not from but to reality"(16) in its "simplest terms...to learn what it has to teach."(17) The sea, the mountains, and the wilderness are being approached in a deliberate manner with the thought that what is gained in such encounters will be of benefit in up-grading individuals and through them in up-grading the country. The schools are organized to give this direction to adventure.

The following quotes from Outward Bound - their thoughts and experiences - emphasize the thinking and attention given to developing a comprehensive awareness of reality; an awareness of the interrelationship of the elements of life; the natural environment, the social reality and the personal inner life.

> "We see a deeper understanding of others...A boy sitting on the top of a cliff belaying his climbing partner has a life of a man in his hands. And when he is on the bottom end of the climbing rope, the interdependence of human beings is felt even more dramatically."(18)

> "He must remember that success in activities is not usually due solely to him and his effort, but to the combined effort, interest and ability of both himself and the group, and so he shares his success with them."(19)

> "A boy who sits alone on the hillside without food and with the basic minimum of shelter only for three days and three nights, returns with a new concept of the 'the fragility of life'... The human perspective from man the hunter to man the dreamer can be evolved by a hungry stomach under a sky full of stars. Deeper awareness, a sense of self, is evolved."(20)

A good example of an Outward Bound activity coincident with Indian habit and rationale is the early morning "dip" - taken in the nearest icy water. The concept is not one of suffering just simply so one may overcome that suffering, but also with the purpose of developing resistance to colds and ailments.(21) The "dip" is seen by both the Indians and Outward Bound to provide this toughness as well as being a daily reaffirmation of one's ability to be up to that which is over against man.

The Outward Bound quest is, then, ultimately "inward bound". "Solo, the experience of being three days and three nights alone, without food and the barest minimum of shelter, provides the opportunity"(22) and is the high point of a definite and planned build-up.

> "At the start of the solo students were informed that this was to be a period of fasting and personal discomfort. It was to be a time of complete detachment, the student's concern focussed upon a deeper understanding of himself and others, and not upon which plants he could eat in order to fill his stomach. They had to condition themselves, discipline themselves, in a new sense, and not let hunger, cold and loneliness become all-consuming. Deprivation was seen as a means of sharpening their senses and many of the students passed beyond the material concern for food and shelter and had an experience that they described almost in mystical or spiritual terms(23)...Suddenly each man is entirely alone, on his own, facing himself. We talk a lot about man's role in terms of self and others and God - and all this comes together on 'solo'...They come back and tell us about dreams...Some write poems. Some sit there and cry...(24) The solitude and the wilderness environment became a mirror for self, the human dimension of communing with nature, only when the student reached the point of not looking to nature to provide him with physical needs."(25)

These words from Outward Bound ring as no accidental echo from the past, for the mountains were here yesterday and a main concern of the Indian's life was the "...pursuit of wisdom, both of the body and of the mind."(26) It is on this level that the most meaningful similarity between Outward Bound and the North American Indian appears. Black Elk speaks for the Indian people in the following comparison of the Indian ritual "crying for a vision or lamenting" and the Outward Bound "sole".

> "...in the old days we all - men and women - 'lamented' all the time... but (women) do not go up on a very high mountain (as men do). They go up on a hill in a valley, for they are women and need protection."(27)

The girls' course at Outward Bound is considered this way; yet, basically it is the same as for the men. And returning again to Black Elk's account:

> "...much depends on the nature of the person who cries for a vision, and upon the degree to which he has purified and prepared himself...for if we really wish to 'lament' we must be poor in the things of this world."(28)

A place is prepared on a high mountain and the "lamenter" takes with him his pipe which symbolizes the power of the mind(29) and his buffalo robe which he will use at night, "...nights alone, without food and with the barest minimum of shelter" are for the "soloist", like the Indian "lamenter", the directing of suffering into the overcoming of suffering.

> "He must always be careful lest distracting thoughts come to him, yet he must be alert...he will stand firmly and conquer all distracting thoughts and will become purified from all that is not good. Then he may receive some great vision that will bring strength to the nation."(30)

This message from Black Elk - "Be attentive!" - well expresses a spirit which is also central to the "solo": "...the student's concern focusses upon a deeper understanding of himself and others...they had to condition themselves, disipline themsleves...Deprivation was seen as a means of sharpening their senses..."

> "There are many reasons for going to a lonely mountaintop to 'lament'...for understanding...to make ourselves brave for a great ordeal...But perhaps the most important reason for 'lamenting' is that it helps us to realize our oneness with all things, to know that all things are our relatives..."(31)

And from Outward Bound: "...the students ... had an experience that they described almost in mystical or spiritual terms...alone, on his own, facing himself...about man's role in terms of self and others and God -- and all this comes together on 'solo'..."

Black Elk and Outward Bound are both speaking of the same awareness of relationship and establishment of a rapport and a sharing with the world. A man's life and the life of his people is seen to depend on this; that a man be hard on himself and be aggressive against those forces which would dissipate the crucial balance in himself and in the world - in effect, to be responsible for the maintainance of the dynamic harmony between the forces of the world: the personal inner life, the natural environment and the social reality.

The "solo", be it with Black Elk and the Indian people, an alpine bivouac, or during a night flight with St. Exupery, may then become the impetus for saying the "thou" to that once dispersed and now concentrated core of self - that solitary reality within, which, having now been befriended, can speak the "thou" to the not-self.

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